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ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

Novel vaccines for use against β -hemolytic *Streptococcus* colonization or infection are disclosed. The vaccines contain an immunogenic amount of a variant of streptococcal C5a peptidase (SCP). Also disclosed is a method of
5 protecting a susceptible mammal against β -hemolytic *Streptococcus* colonization or infection by administering such a vaccine. Enzymatically inactive SCP, and polynucleotides encoding these SCP proteins are further disclosed.

"Express Mail" mailing label number: EL721275322US

Date of Deposit: May 30, 2001

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11/11/01 11:11:11